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AD-A234 161

**The Malvinas Conflict: Argentine Practice of
the Operational Art**

**A Monograph
by
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Infantry**



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Second Term, AY 89/90

Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited

01 4 90 128

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED		1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS	
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY		3. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for public release;	
2b. DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE			
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)	
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION School of Advanced Military Studies, USACGSC	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) ATZL - SWV	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION	
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027-6900		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)	
8a. NAME OF FUNDING / SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS	
		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.
		TASK NO.	WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) The Malvinas Conflict: Argentinian Practice of the Operational Art (U)			
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) MAJ Francis X. Kinney, USA			
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Monograph	13b. TIME COVERED FROM _____ TO _____	14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 90-5-25	15. PAGE COUNT 51
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION			
17. COSATI CODES		18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)	
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP	
		Malvinas Falklands Argentina	
		Argentinian Armed Forces	
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)			
<p>This monograph focuses on Argentinian practice of the Operational Art during the Malvinas/Falklands conflict of 1982. It seeks to determine to what extent Argentina's defeat can be attributed to shortcomings at the operational level. Following a review of Argentinian doctrine, the Argentinian operational proficiency is evaluated using the following criteria: reasonableness of assumptions; consideration of branches and sequels; center of gravity analysis; and adequacy of the sustainment effort.</p> <p>The monograph concludes that Argentinian practice of the Operational Art was inadequate, and contributed to the defeat. It suggests that the principal error made was the failure to develop branches to the basic plan that addressed possible and dangerous contingencies.</p>			
20. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS		21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED	
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL MAJ Francis X. Kinney		22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (913) 684-3437	22c. OFFICE SYMBOL ATZL-SWV

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

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Title of Monograph: The Malvinas Conflict: Argentine
Practice of the Operational Art

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REMARKS	
A-1	

ABSTRACT

THE MALVINAS CONFLICT: ARGENTINIAN PRACTICE OF THE OPERATIONAL ART.

By Major Francis X. Kinney, USA. 51 Pages.

This monograph focuses on the Argentinian practice of the operational art during the Falklands/Malvinas conflict of 1982. It seeks to determine to what extent Argentina's defeat in that conflict can be attributed to shortcomings at the operational level. The monograph relies principally on Argentinian Government documents.

The monograph begins by examining Argentinian doctrine at the time of the conflict to determine how the Argentinians viewed what the U.S. Army now calls the operational level of war. The examination establishes that there is sufficient similarity between contemporary U.S. operational doctrine and Argentinian doctrine of the time of the Falklands conflict to justify the use of contemporary measurements of operational proficiency to evaluate Argentinian practice of the operational art during that conflict. The criteria used for this evaluation are: reasonableness of assumptions; consideration of branches and sequels; center of gravity analysis; and adequacy of the sustainment effort.

The monograph suggests that Argentinian planning for the Falkland Islands conflict was seriously flawed. The principal error made by the Argentinian planners was a failure to develop branches to the basic plan that addressed possible and dangerous contingencies. This failure was the direct cause of the operational quandary that Argentina found herself in: she faced imminent war with inadequate plans, and her inability to improvise was limited by the remoteness of the islands, the spartan nature of the theater of operations, and an impending British naval blockade.

The monograph concludes that mistakes in the actual conduct of the conflict also contributed to the Argentinian defeat. The more salient ones included: a failure to properly consider risk; poor communication between the operational and the strategic levels; a lack of synchronization of the efforts of the different services; and a failure to develop an adequate transportation plan. The lessons that can be learned from these Argentinian mistakes are of great relevance to the contemporary practitioner of operational art.

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I - INTRODUCTION

Clausewitz's warning to a nation considering the initiation of belligerency was succinct:

...at the outset of a war its character and scope should be determined on the basis of the political probabilities. The closer these political probabilities drive war toward the absolute, the more the belligerent states are involved and drawn into its vortex, the clearer appear the connections among its separate actions, and the more imperative the need not to take the first step without considering the last.¹

The Falklands/Malvinas Conflict of 1982 resulted in a resounding defeat for Argentina. Though Argentina was initially successful, capturing the contested South Atlantic islands through a coup de main, this success was fleeting. She proved unequal to the task of defending her acquisitions against the subsequent actions of a determined opponent. Perhaps this defeat was due in large part to the failure of her leaders to heed Clausewitz's admonition about considering the consequences of the initial action.

Much has been written about the conduct of this conflict from the British perspective; however, little is published in English about the Argentinian perspective. Though we can find out fairly easily from these sources how Argentina was defeated, it is harder to determine how Argentina's planners envisioned the conflict; what plans they made for it; and what mistakes they may have made in its prosecution that contributed directly to defeat. This monograph will seek to address these issues. It will do so by focusing on the

Argentinian practice of the operational art to determine if shortcomings at the operational level of war contributed directly to her defeat. Furthermore, it will seek to rely principally on Argentinian sources.

FM 100-5, Operations defines operational art as:

...the employment of military forces to attain strategic goals in a theater of war or theater of operations through the design, organization, and conduct of campaigns, and major operations.²

Thus, in order to assess operational proficiency, I will focus on the design, organization, and conduct of the campaigns developed by Argentina's planners to attain her desired strategic goals. The specific criteria that I will use to assess operational proficiency are: reasonableness of assumptions; consideration of branches and sequels; identification and orientation on centers of gravity; and adequacy of the sustainment effort. These criteria have been synthesized from contemporary US doctrine.³ It is appropriate to analyze the campaigns developed by Argentinian planners in order to measure Argentinian operational proficiency, because they too thought campaigns were the devices to be used to attain strategic goals. Argentinian doctrine, as practiced in 1982, defined a campaign plan as "a series of related military operations, whose purpose is the attaining of a strategic operational objective within a determined time frame."⁴

While it is problematic to propose that any set of criteria can comprehensively quantify or evaluate what is

recognized as an art not a science, such an attempt can be useful. The utility of the exercise results from identifying errors of omission or of analysis that have unfavourable operational consequences. The proposed criteria identify four of the most important things that an operational commander must do: make reasonable assumptions in the absence of information; develop branches and sequels that address likely contingencies; orient on centers of gravity - attacking the enemy's and protecting one's own; and ensure that envisioned operations can be sustained.

Initially, the monograph will provide an overview of Argentinian doctrine at the time of the conflict. It will focus on their equivalent to what we now call the operational level of war and operational art. This overview has two purposes. First of all, to compare their doctrine to contemporary operational theory and US doctrine in order to determine the sufficiency of the Argentinian doctrine. Secondly, to determine whether their doctrine explicitly recognized the criteria I have developed to evaluate the design and conduct of a campaign. The monograph will continue by describing the planning process followed by the Argentinians and the resulting plans. The measures of effectiveness will then be used to analyze the design of the Argentinian plan developed for the seizure of the Falkland Islands, and the conduct of operations subsequent to the capture of the islands and prior to their retaking by the

British. In its conclusions, the monograph will suggest lessons that may be of significance for the contemporary practitioner of operational art.

As this analysis of the Argentinian practice of the operational art is made, the reader must keep in mind another of Clausewitz's reminders:

If the critic wishes to distribute praise or blame, he must certainly try to put himself exactly in the position of the commander; in other words, he must assemble everything the commander knew and all the motives that affected his decision, and ignore all that he could not or did not know, especially the outcome.⁵

My purpose is not to evaluate Argentinian proficiency at the operational level of war in light of the results attained. Instead, it is to measure it against the standards they themselves established in their doctrine, and against the four criteria that I have developed - criteria that I feel were valid considerations at the time of the Falklands conflict, and that remain so today.

II - DOCTRINAL AND THEORETICAL VIEWS OF THE LEVELS OF WAR

At the time of the Falklands/Malvinas Conflict, the Argentinian Armed Forces possessed no joint doctrine, only separate doctrines for each of their services.⁶ Thus, I will restrict my analysis to the Argentinian Army's doctrine as set out in their capstone doctrinal manual, RC-2-2, Conduccion para las Fuerzas Terrestres (Operations for the Ground Forces).

The Army's doctrine recognized levels of command instead of levels of war as does contemporary US doctrine. Only two levels of command, high and low tactics, were identified versus the three levels of war that US doctrine recognizes. High tactics corresponded to the levels of command from battalion through ground component of a theater of operations or war, and was characterized by the following: large formations; the need to plan over extended periods; wide scope of action; prolonged lapses between planning and execution phases; and the requirement to anticipate contingencies and unpredictable situations.⁷ The Army's doctrine implicitly excluded the requirement to develop campaign plans from the level of high tactics, suggesting instead that "the commander's freedom of action will be defined by the parameters of the campaign plan."⁸ Low tactics corresponded to the levels of command at company and below, and was characterized principally by shorter timeframes - in particular, commanders at this level did not have to plan for future operations, they just had to concentrate on the imminent battle.⁹

The manual also recognized that there was a third level of command, the strategic-operational.¹⁰ However, it stated that the doctrine for that level was incomplete as of the time of publication.¹¹ Some of the responsibilities of this level of command were described in an appendix to the manual, these included: exercising operational command over assigned

forces; creating joint task forces and subordinate commands as necessary; and adopting the order of battle that is prescribed by the campaign plan.¹²

The responsibilities of the Argentinian strategic-operational commander were similar to those of a contemporary US operational commander, with the exception of the last one cited. This last requirement leaves doubt about what level of command was doctrinally responsible for developing campaign plans to accomplish assigned objectives or strategic goals, (a responsibility that current US doctrine clearly assigns to the operational commander). It would appear that the strategic-operational commander was responsible for the conduct of already developed campaigns, and that some higher level of command was responsible for the development of campaigns. The manual did mention that there was a higher level of command, the "strategic-military," however, no specific responsibilities were attributed to it other than the establishment of subordinate strategic operational commands.¹³

This survey of the Argentinian Army's Operations manual suggests that the Argentinians did not differentiate between levels of war as the US Army currently does, but instead differentiated between levels of command - each with separate characteristics and responsibilities. The levels of command mentioned are similar to those levels of war recognized by current US doctrine; the strategic military corresponding to

the strategic, the strategic operational to our operational and the two tactical ones to our tactical level.

Furthermore, it is apparent that the role of higher levels of command such as the military strategic or the strategic-operational were not doctrinally prescribed or accepted at the time of conflict. Thus, it is difficult to determine from this manual what level of command was charged with the design and conduct of campaign plans - what the US Army holds currently as the essence of the operational art.¹⁴ It is also unclear who exactly commanded at these highest levels. The responsibilities of the strategic-operational commander would indicate that he was probably a theater commander.

The Argentinian Army's doctrine recognized that the campaign plan was the principal vehicle for attaining strategic objectives,¹⁵ just as contemporary US doctrine does;¹⁶ However, despite this emphasis, their doctrine did not fully develop the characteristics of a campaign plan. Instead, it prescribed the principal features of a campaign plan,¹⁷ and highlighted several considerations for the planner. These considerations were: the requirement to plan for subsequent operations;¹⁸ the influence of time on the planner;¹⁹ the need to acquire intelligence about enemy capabilities and weaknesses, and about the geographical features of the area of operations.²⁰ The Argentinian doctrine also stated that a well designed campaign would place the enemy in such a situation that his forces would

become incapable of mutual support, his efforts would lose cohesion, and the enemy commander would be unable to effectively control his forces. The doctrinal term that described such a situation was "strategic operational dislocation."²¹

The few characteristics of a campaign plan developed by the Argentinian Army's operations manual suggest either an incomplete understanding of the complex nature of a campaign and of the demands of the conduct of the operational art, or that such materiel was presented elsewhere. An example of what I consider to be an incomplete understanding of the requirements of a campaign plan can be found in the section on planning. The requirement to plan for subsequent operations was linked just to outcomes (what US doctrine currently calls sequels),²² not to any freedom of choice that the enemy commander may have. Current US doctrine addresses this latter concern by prescribing branches.²³ In chess parlance, a branch would be a move considered to counter a possible enemy move, while a sequel would be a course of action developed to follow an upcoming complicated exchange whose outcome is not clear - a situation for which the prudent player develops contingencies for winning, losing, or even exchanges.

Another omission in the discussion was the failure to recognize that the campaign planner must focus on enemy intentions. The Argentinian Army's doctrine emphasized enemy

capabilities instead.*⁴ Current US operational doctrine emphasizes the importance of assumptions about enemy intentions for the campaign planner.*⁵ It is, after all, the product of intentions and capabilities that produce a threat, not just an enemy capability in and of itself. Also absent from the manual was any mention of theoretical terms such as centers of gravity, culminating points, or lines of operations. These theoretical concepts are essential in the design of a campaign because they cause the planner to consider fundamentals such as synchronizing the main effort, protecting the force, phasing operations, and providing for sustainment. My principal conclusions based on this brief study of the Argentinian Army's doctrine include: that it recognized the existence of an intervening level of command between the strategic and tactical levels; that it accorded central importance to the campaign plan as a way of sequencing military operations to achieve strategic goals; and that it was incomplete in its treatise of the characteristics of a campaign.

III - THE ARGENTINIAN PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING PROCESS:

The initial decision to formally consider the taking of the Malvinas by force was made by the Argentinian Military Junta on 5 January 1982. The Junta determined that it was necessary to consider the feasibility of occupying the islands in case Great Britain stalled the ongoing negotiations.²² On the 12th of January, the Junta decided to designate an Ad-Hoc Working Committee to "analyze the possibility of using military means in the Malvinas dispute and to prescribe possible courses of action for the employment of military force."²³ The political objective that the Junta sought to achieve was to "consolidate Argentinian sovereignty on the islands of the Malvinas, Georgias, and South Sandwich and allow its full exercise in the South Atlantic."²⁴ (See map on P. 38).

The planning group was initially directed to plan for operations no earlier than 9 July 1982.²⁵ (Subsequently, the Group was told to plan for a no earlier date than 15 May, with a proviso that a minimum of 15 days notice would be given).²⁶ The decision by the Junta to create an Ad-Hoc group to develop plans violated prescribed planning procedures which allocated such responsibilities to the Joint General Staff of the Armed Services.²⁷

The Working Group developed a preliminary campaign plan (codenamed Operation Azul (Blue)) that contained no explicit assumptions, and that only considered British forces already

in the theater.³² (At the time, the British had only a token force consisting of a platoon of Royal Marines, and the Antarctic support vessel HMS Endurance.)³³ The plan called for the occupation of the Falkland Islands by a sizeable amphibious force on D-day through the conduct of a bloodless operation. It also called for the subsequent installation of a military government, and for the immediate withdrawal of all deployed forces with the exception of a small military garrison that was to remain to assist the military government. All the above actions were to be completed by D + 5.³⁴ The military endstate identified by the Working Group was:

Impose on Great Britain the acceptance of a military fait accompli which will allow the exercising of Argentinian sovereignty over the Islands of the Malvinas, Georgias, and South Sandwich, and prevent further efforts to usurp this sovereignty, in order to attain the stated political objective.³⁵

Evidently, this plan was little more than a plan for a tactical operation to seize the lightly defended islands, followed by the installation of a military government that would derive its ability to rule from the presence of a military garrison. Though the Working Group did not consider the possibility of a British attempt to retake the islands in its plan, it did raise the issue in additional recommendations that it made to the Junta. In particular, the group suggested that:

In order to deal with the possibility of a strategic military response by Great Britain, this

Working Group concludes that the Military Committee must designate an entity at the highest level, responsible for continuously monitoring this possibility and empowered to develop a new strategic directive.³⁶

The concept plan was presented by the Working Group to the Junta on 16 March 1982, and accepted without modifications.³⁷ However, the Junta did direct the Chief of the Joint Staff to consider the consequences of military reaction by Great Britain and of a possible intervention by Chile in the conflict, and to develop a schematic campaign plan that considered all measures necessary in case of a British military reaction.³⁸ At no time did the Junta indicate either that there was any cause for urgency or that any changes in the dates provided for planning purposes were being contemplated.

On the 24th of March, following the development of the crisis on the South Georgia Islands,³⁹ the Military Junta directed that the commander of the military theater of operations brief on the 26th of March the earliest possible date that Operation Azul could be carried out. This was the first indication that the government was considering accelerating the timetable for the taking of the Malvinas as had been previously laid out in the developed plan.⁴⁰ On the 26th, the Junta decided to occupy the Malvinas between the 1st and 3rd of April, the actual selection of the date being left to the theater commander.⁴¹ The occupation of the disputed islands was intended to accomplish the following

objectives:⁴²

- Affirm and defend the Argentine position on the Georgia islands.
- Prevent Great Britain from using the islands and establishing a naval and air defense system on them.
- Prevent British reinforcement in the zone, because such reinforcement would impact negatively on Argentinian rights, strategies, positions, and objectives in the South Atlantic and Antarctic regions.
- Initiate negotiations and place Argentina in an advantageous negotiating position.

That same day, actual orders for Operation Azul were issued to the units selected for the operation.⁴³ An amphibious task force (TF 40) embarked on the 28th of March from mainland Argentina, and following a dawn assault, accepted the surrender of the British garrison on the Falklands on the 2d of April. Later that day, the Marine task force that had seized the islands redeployed by air to the continent, and elements of the 25th Infantry Regiment of the Army began to arrive on the islands to assume their garrison duties.⁴⁴ The British garrison on South Georgia surrendered on the 3d of April to the Argentine forces after a brief fire fight.⁴⁵ The British again suffered no casualties.⁴⁶

Operation Azul succeeded in attaining strategic surprise - the British were unable to reinforce the islands prior to the Argentine attack - however, the defending garrisons on both the Falkland and the South Georgia Islands were aware of the imminent assaults. Despite this warning and the armed resistance put up by the British defenders, the Argentinians

succeeded in capturing the islands without inflicting casualties on the British garrison or the residents of the islands. This had been one of the major objectives of the operation. At the conclusion of D-day everything was going according to the original plan, and the Argentinian armed forces assumed that the third and final phase of Operation Azul, "Maintenance of the Objective and Military Government," had begun.⁴⁷

Almost immediately after the capture of the Malvinas, the Argentinian government was faced with uncontrovertible evidence that the British would not accept the fait accompli, and were taking steps that could result in an armed confrontation in the South Atlantic. On the 3d of April, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, announced that "a large task force will sail as soon as preparations are complete."⁴⁸ Indeed, the first elements of that task force sailed from Portsmouth on the 5th of April.⁴⁹ The Argentinians had no way of knowing that the British had dispatched two nuclear submarines to the region prior to the actual invasion (Spartan from Gibraltar on 31 March and Splendid from Scotland on 1 April).⁵⁰ Furthermore, the British had been able to mobilize the international community to their cause and had succeeded in passing UN resolution 502 on the 3rd of April.⁵¹ This resolution called for the immediate withdrawal of Argentinian forces from the Falkland Islands.⁵² Finally, on the 4th of April, the British secured

permission from the United States to use the military facilities on Ascension Island in the mid-Atlantic to reprovision its task force en route to the South Atlantic.⁵³

Consequently, the Argentinians had to begin modifying their plan. On the 3rd of April, the Junta decided to begin reinforcing the Malvinas and began considering possible courses of action for the defense of the islands.⁵⁴ Also on the 3d of April, a request by the Malvinas Theater Commander for the transfer of armored cars and additional forces to the islands was approved by the Junta.⁵⁵ The subsequent arrival of elements of the 8th Infantry Regiment on the Falklands on the 6th of April represented the first deviation from the order of battle prescribed for Operation Azul.⁵⁶

Still on the 3d of April, the Chief of Naval Operations briefed the Junta on a possible naval course of action.⁵⁷ The following day, specific missions were assigned to the Strategic Air Command (which had not been involved in any military operations to date).⁵⁸ Finally, on the 7th of April, the Malvinas Theater of Operations was inactivated and its place was taken by the South Atlantic Theater of Operations.⁵⁹ On the 12th of April, the operational commander, Vice Admiral Lombardo (who had assumed the position of Commander, South Atlantic Theater of Operations on the 7th of April) issued a campaign plan. His restated mission was to:

Consolidate the insular regions reconquered,
impeding their recapture by the opponent, support

the actions of the military government in order to exercise Argentinian Sovereignty over the islands of the Malvinas, South Georgias, and South Sandwich, and to contribute to the consolidation of this exercise of sovereignty in the South Atlantic.⁶⁰

However, prior to the issuance of this theater order, a supporting command (the Strategic Air Command) had prepared its own operational plan (OPLAN 2/82 "Maintenance of Sovereignty" on 7 April),⁶¹ and the Ground Component Commander of the S. Atlantic Theater, Brigadier General Daher, had already issued an operations order for the Falklands garrison (Operations Order Nr 01/82 (Defense)).⁶² During these first weeks of April 1982, the Argentinian decision making process can best be described as reactive, improvisational, and disjointed. No attempts were made to reevaluate the situation in a formal manner or to formally structure the planning process, even as new information became available.⁶³

IV - ANALYSIS OF ARGENTINIAN PLANS AND OPERATIONS

The first criterion that I will use to assess Argentinian operational proficiency during the Falklands Conflict is that of reasonableness of assumptions made at the outset. FM 100-5 states that "reasonable assumptions about enemy intentions and capabilities" are essential to the development of a campaign plan.⁶⁴ Assumptions allow the planner to make decisions in the absence of total information.⁶⁵ The degree of correctness of an assumption

tells us little about the reasonableness of the assumption, for the true test of reasonableness is whether a prudent and unbiased person, given the same information, would reach the same conclusion. For assumptions after all, are projections based on indicators intended to fill out incomplete information.

The first assumption made by the Argentinian planners was that Great Britain would not attempt to recapture the lost islands. General Leopoldo Galtieri (the Argentinian President at the time of the conflict) expressed this belief in an August 1982 interview:

I will tell you that if a British reaction appeared to us as feasible, we never considered it a possibility. Personally I thought a British reaction was only remotely feasible and totally improbable. In any way, I never expected such a disproportionate response. Nobody expected it. Why should a country located in Europe be so concerned over some far off islands in the South Atlantic that served their national interest no purpose whatsoever? It seems to me that there is a lack of logic there.⁶⁶

The course of events during the conflict demonstrated that he was incorrect in making this assumption. It appears that the Military Junta shared this conviction and transmitted it to the Working Group that they tasked to develop a campaign plan for the taking of the Falklands. Furthermore, their instructions to the group to work in the utmost secrecy resulted in almost no consultation with other branches of the government that could have refuted this assumption.⁶⁷ For instance, the Ministry of Planning had

previously studied the contingency of conflict with the United Kingdom over the Falklands, and had concluded that it was the second most likely scenario for conflict that faced the nation. (The most likely war scenario identified had been one with Chile over the disputes in the Tierra del Fuego region). It had qualified this scenario for conflict with the United Kingdom as a "hypothesis of war on short notice."⁶⁶

There were, however, some reasons for the Argentinians to doubt Britain's commitment to the islands and her ability to project force into the region. The British had decided in June of 1981 to recall and decommission HMS Endurance, an ice-patrol vessel, which had been its only manifestation of presence in the South Atlantic region.⁶⁷ Britain had also scheduled her two remaining aircraft carriers (HMS Hermes and HMS Invincible) for decommissioning.⁶⁸ Additionally, she had recently decommissioned one of only two amphibious assault ships in the fleet (HMS Intrepid).⁶⁹ Finally, the Argentinians concluded that the Falklands were so far away that the British would not be able to sustain any major operations without US assistance, specifically use of the facilities at Ascension Island as a staging area.⁷⁰ Nonetheless, despite these possible indicators of a lack of British resolve and of their limited capabilities, a thorough analysis of all available information would have led Argentina's planners to reach different conclusions. (Her own

Ministry of Planning had done so following a more rigorous consideration of available information). This first conclusion therefore was only reasonable based on the incompleteness of the information consulted.

The second conclusion made by the Argentinian planners was that the United States would not provide assistance to Great Britain if she were to attempt to retake the islands.⁷³ The reasons for this conclusion included: Argentine - US relations had improved dramatically since the Reagan Administration had come to power the previous year;⁷⁴ General Galtieri had been warmly received by the US Government during a recent visit to Washington; the US embargo on security assistance and sales of armaments and spare parts to Argentina over human rights considerations had recently been lifted; and the Argentinian Army was helping US interests in Central America by training the Contras.⁷⁵ Furthermore, there was a belief that the US had given a cryptic approval to Argentina's plans.⁷⁶ Once again, the Ad Hoc nature of the planning group, and its lack of access to better informed intelligence and planning agencies suggest that the validity of this assumption was not thoroughly tested. However, given the nature of the information consulted, it was a reasonable conclusion.

The second criterion that I am using to assess operational proficiency is consideration of branches and sequels. The initial plan for the taking of the Falkland

Islands did not contain either branches or sequels. The envisioned operation was one in which success was seen as certain and which concluded that hostilities would cease following the first engagements. The closest that the Working Group, that developed the initial plan, came to addressing contingency operations was in its recommendation to the Junta that the possibility of a British military response be considered.⁷⁷ The Junta however, decided to accelerate the process for retaking the Falklands without fully considering this British course of action. The effects of this operational failure to consider branches and sequels were rapidly felt by the Argentiniens once the British intent to recapture the islands became known. The Argentiniens were forced to resort to improvisation in a theater of operations whose remoteness and inhospitability demanded deliberate planning and extensive preparation and did not favor hasty improvisation.

The failure to consider branches and sequels was not limited to just the original campaign plan. The subsequent plans developed by the theater commander and the Malvinas garrison commander also demonstrated a surrealistic quality in their apparent disregard of the unfavorable correlation of forces and of the likely consequences of any combat. The theater defensive plan for example (issued 120800 April 1982) called for the defense of all insular areas, to include the Georgia and South Sandwich Islands.⁷⁸ The commander should

have considered the sequel to a British attack on these remote and impossible to maintain outposts and realized that he could not defend them. A more suitable mission for the detachment on these islands might have been to demonstrate Argentinian resolve by forcing the British to fight to retake the islands.⁷⁹

The defensive order issued by the commander on the Falkland Islands was similarly unrealistic. The commander should have recognized that his forces were incapable of defending all possible landing sites or of maneuvering against a British force that came ashore any distance from Port Stanley. Yet his order called for a mobile reserve to be prepared to attack and destroy any British attempt to establish a beachhead.⁸⁰ Such an undertaking was clearly beyond the capabilities of his forces. They lacked the materiel, mobility, air superiority, and training to do much more than put up a positional defense around Port Stanley.

If the operational commanders had honestly considered the likely sequels to the probable engagements, they would have concluded that there was little they could do to counter the courses of action available to the British. The result of such a sober analysis would have been a realization that there were insufficient ways and means available to achieve assigned ends. Perhaps then the operational commanders could have fulfilled one of their basic obligations - informing the strategic echelon of the imbalance between ways, ends, and

means.²¹ However, one of the reasons that realistic appraisals of the situation were hard to come by was that the Argentinians thought they were dealing from a position of strength. This optimism was reinforced by the significant successes obtained by the air arm (the destroying of HMS Sheffield and of the container ship Atlantic Conveyor). It was also buttressed by the belief that the British could not sustain their efforts to retake the islands.²² The Argentinians held this view until the British defeated their sizeable garrison at Goose Green on the 29th of May.²³

The next criterion to be used to assess operational proficiency is the extent to which the Argentinian operational commanders identified both enemy and friendly centers of gravity and acted to destroy the former and protect the latter.²⁴ It has been suggested that the essence of the operational art is "the identification of the enemy's center of gravity and the single-minded focus on the sequence of actions necessary to expose and destroy it."²⁵

The Argentinians did not address centers of gravity in the original plan to capture the islands. Given the limited scope and duration of the envisioned actions and the size of the enemy (one platoon), I do not think that a center of gravity analysis was required. In their subsequent defensive plans, Port Stanley was identified as the friendly center of gravity several times. What this apparently meant was that he who held Port Stanley possessed the Falkland Islands.

This interpretation of center of gravity does not fit in with Clausewitz's classical definition of representing a hub of power.⁸⁶

Also absent in the Argentinian plans and orders that I have examined, was any specific mention of the enemy's sources of strength. Identification of these sources of strengths would, in a manner similar to a center of gravity analysis, allow tactical and operational commanders to focus their efforts. However, evidence that an analysis of enemy strengths was conducted by the Argentinian Air Force is contained in its Operations Plan of 7 April 1982 (Plan "Maintenance of Sovereignty") which established an order of priority for targets to be engaged.⁸⁷ The highest priority targets were the two British aircraft carriers, next were the troop carriers, and then the remaining ships of the fleet were assigned descending priorities for engagement. Though this prioritization was not strictly a center of gravity analysis, it did identify what was essential to the enemy's efforts and helped focus friendly efforts on those vital assets.

Unfortunately for the Argentinians, the combination of extreme range and the air to air superiority of the British Harrier aircraft meant that their pilots did not have the luxury to select their targets. Instead, they had to attempt to conceal their approach and engage whatever target they could find in their one bombing run. This was a case where

tactical limitations affected the ability to accomplish operational objectives.

In a similar manner, the ground component correctly recognized that any beachhead represented the location where all offensive efforts had to be focused. However, considerable limitations (in this case British local air superiority, difficult cross-country mobility, limited roads, and an inability to sustain forces away from logistical bases)** negated an offensive against a distant beachhead as a viable option to the ground component commander on the islands.

Even if the Argentinians had identified a British center of gravity, there would still be room for second guessing their conclusions because of the lack of consensus over the exact meaning of the term center of gravity. One analyst of the Falklands conflict suggests that "the center of gravity is that point which, if successfully attacked by the enemy, can lead to irretrievable defeat," and that for the British it was operational sustainment.** I feel that center of gravity should instead be synonymous with the defeat mechanism of each force. One does not defeat the enemy with lines of communications (LOCs) or with logistics. These merely enable a commander to generate a center of gravity, and sustain him as he applies this strength against the enemy. I believe that the British center of gravity was their ground forces - they could not be victorious without

landing troops and defeating the Argentinian garrison. This center of gravity was embryonic until it was consolidated ashore. The other elements of the force were decisive points not centers of gravity; these included their aircraft, aircraft carriers, and logistical system. If any one of these had been knocked out, their center of gravity would have become extremely vulnerable.

On the Argentinian side, I do not believe that the operational commander succeeded in creating a classical center of gravity. Clausewitz defines the center of gravity as the "hub of all power and movement." It is evident however, that the Argentinians were unable to generate much combat power at all because of their many failures in the preparation for conflict and in the actual conduct of the war effort. Instead of a hub of power, what they had at the core was a vacuum that contributed to the rapid collapse of their forces. Perhaps the analogy of a tropical depression is useful in portraying the idea that at the vortex there must be a source of energy that allows the system to sustain itself and to increase strength. If that source of energy is absent, the resulting storm will be unable to develop either coherence or significant strength. If the source is removed, the strength of the system will rapidly dissipate.

The final criterion I am using to assess Argentinian operational proficiency during the Falklands conflict is that of the adequacy of the sustainment effort. Sustainment was

not a problem in the initial seizure of the Falkland Islands (the operation was a limited one, and the necessary logistical assets had been identified and procured prior to its execution). However, sustainment did adversely affect the subsequent defensive operations. Sustainment was probably the one area in which Argentina's operational planners committed the most egregious errors. The planners were faced with significant sustainment constraints throughout the campaign because "no thought was given to necessary logistical actions that would have facilitated dealing with the contingency that actually came about."⁹⁰ Consequently, they had to rely almost exclusively on improvisation. However, unpreparedness does not excuse the almost total disregard which the operational commander demonstrated for sustainment in his operational plan.

The theater operations order of 12 April had but three brief sentences under Paragraph 4. Logistics:

Logistical support will be the responsibility of each service component on the MALVINAS. This command will coordinate all such support through the Malvinas garrison commander.

The logistical support of all other required forces will be the responsibility of each service.

Logistic support of the civil population of the islands will be coordinated through the Military Government. ⁹¹

The order contained no logistics annex nor any coordinating instructions that provided further information on sustainment. Obviously, little thought was given to

sustainment by the theater commander.

The seriousness of this oversight can be seen in the area of transportation, one of the key sustainment functions, where no attempt was made by the theater commander to plan or control transportation operations.⁹² The Argentinian Army's report on the Falklands Conflict described these critical transportation problems:

At the strategic operational level, transportation was characterized by the lack of interservice coordination in the employment of the available means, there being no theater level transportation manager to deconflict competing interests.⁹³

Major errors were also made in other key sustainment functional areas.⁹⁴ In the area of manning, reinforcements were sent to the Falkland Islands without determining whether they were properly equipped, or whether they could be sustained.⁹⁵ The failure to establish levels of supply or other sustainment management controls at any time during the conflict adversely affected the functional areas of arming and fueling.⁹⁶ The theater sustainment effort is a vital part of the force generation process. During the Falklands crisis, sustainment was not integrated into the operational plans developed. Responsibility for sustainment could not be abdicated by the operational commander to each individual service as it was in this case. By any measure, the Argentinian sustainment effort was totally inadequate and demonstrated significant operational shortcomings.

V - CONCLUSIONS

The Argentinian planning for the Falkland Islands conflict was seriously flawed. Operation Azul (the plan for the initial taking of the islands) was in essence a tactical-operational plan that had no sequels past the capture of the islands and that contained no branches to address a significant course of action available to the British - the attempt to retake the islands by force. Such a branch was not considered because the basic assumptions of the plan were that the British would be unable to retake the islands without significant assistance from the United States, and that the US would not provide the necessary assistance - in particular the use of its facilities at Ascension Island.

Though these assumptions were reasonable, they were only reasonable because they were based on an analysis of incomplete information. If all available information had been considered, the Argentinian planners would have formulated different assumptions about the likely British reaction and the probable U.S. role in any ensuing conflict. (It should be recalled that the Ministry of Planning had previously concluded that the British would most probably attempt to retake the islands if the Argentinians were to seize them). Assumptions are made when information essential for making a decision is absent. In this case, the necessary information was not absent, it was not consulted because of the ad-hoc planning process selected. Consequently,

unnecessary, incorrect, yet reasonable (given the information consulted) assumptions were made.

The nature of the assumptions however, does not relieve the planner of the responsibility of developing branches to address possible and dangerous contingencies. That such contingency branches were not developed can again be attributed to the planning process that the Junta decided upon. They elected, for reasons of secrecy, to create an ad-hoc planning group, and instructed it not to consult other agencies. This compartmentalization resulted in available information not been consulted - information that would have led the planners to reach a different conclusion about feasible British courses of action, and that may have pointed out the severe risks involved with Operation Azul. I have found no evidence that indicates that the Argentinians erred in opting for this degree of secrecy. Perhaps their plans may have been discovered by a foreign government if they had not been so closely held, and strategic surprise could have been lost.

The failure to develop a branch that considered the most dangerous enemy course of action was the direct cause of the operational quandary that Argentina found herself in. This was one of the Rattenbach Commission's principal conclusions:

Once the enemy chose the most dangerous course of action available to him, the absence of contingency plans to deal with this likelihood prevented the development and adoption of other strategies that could have left Argentina with a better result."7

Thus, Argentina faced imminent war with inadequate plans, and her ability to improvise solutions was limited by the remoteness of the islands, the spartan nature of the theater of operations, and the impending British naval blockade. Further complicating her position was the decision by her leaders to precipitate a crisis at an extremely inopportune time. Her Army had just begun basic training for its annual draftee class; her Navy had only recently received a partial shipment of the Super Etendard aircraft and accompanying Exocet missiles from France (these had not yet been made operational); and her Air Force was not prepared to conduct air operations over the seas (this had never been identified as one of its missions; previous threat analyses had never indicated the need for such a capability). Given the recruitment cycle followed by the Argentinian Armed Forces, the months of March, April, and May were not in the 'Campaign Season'.

The Argentinians also erred grievously in the prosecution of the conflict. Once it became apparent that not only would the continued military occupation of the Falkland Islands not attain its desired purpose - force the British to negotiate - but also that it was untenable, both the strategic and the operational planners should have reconsidered the equation that linked available means and ways to desired ends. In this case, the national leadership could have changed its objectives and taken advantage of the

numerous opportunities available to negotiate an end to the crisis. However, due to the domestic hysteria that it had cultivated, and the fact that the military regime realized that its political survival depended on the successful resolution of the crisis it had initiated, room for maneuver was limited. Concession on points that the government had publicly held to be unnegotiable would undoubtedly have resulted in its collapse. However, such an outcome would have been preferable to the eventual military defeat it suffered.

The operational commanders should have recognized that they had insufficient means, reflected this in their plans, and communicated this conclusion to the national leadership. They were not convinced however that conflict was imminent, and consequently were not initially alarmed. For example, Brigadier General Crespo, the theater air component commander, had deduced that "his mission was to serve as a deterrent while a solution to the Malvinas dilemma was hammered out within the framework of the international community."²² It is not readily apparent that, during the conduct of the conflict, the operational commanders alerted the Junta to the true extent of the risks incurred, or that the Junta considered modifying its goals. Instead, infeasible operational plans were developed, and goals were set that were both unattainable (for example, the retention of all insular regions) and tactically unsound (requiring the ground component to conduct operations without air or naval

superiority against a superior force).

A lesson can be learned about the dialogue that must go on between the strategic and the operational levels. The planners at both level must share a consensus over the linking of means, ways, and desired ends. The strategic leadership must always ensure that its selected objectives are attainable by available means, and must be willing to modify them when it becomes apparent that they are unattainable. Revision of strategic objectives can be a way of avoiding operational culminating points. The operational echelons must also constantly strive to develop means and ways that are in consonance with enunciated national strategies and goals. It is incumbent on actors at both levels to ensure that there is congruence between means, ways, and ends, and to alert the other level of any perceived imbalances. I do not believe that this occurred in Argentina during the Falklands crisis. Instead, I believe that there was a disfunctional strategic-operational dialogue during the planning and the conduct of the Falklands conflict, and that it contributed directly to the Argentinian defeat.

Despite the fact that the plans for the conflict were deficient and the conduct of the conflict less than adequate, the existing Argentinian defense planning system was adequate. The defense plans and the organization of the Argentinian Armed Forces at the time of the Malvinas conflict were sufficient to address previously identified threats and

requirements. They were also appropriate given the budgetary constraints that faced the nation. They were not capable however, of going to war on short notice with a military power such as Great Britain.

It is possible that a properly conceived campaign plan would have allowed the Argentinians to accomplish their political objectives. The first requirement for such a plan would have been to prepare a branch that addressed the most dangerous British course of action - an attempt to retake the islands by force. Such a campaign would have still depended on strategic surprise for success, but there is no reason to doubt that if the Argentinians could attain strategic surprise in April 1982, that they could have not done so on a subsequent date.

The next requirement would have been to secure the required means for all likely contingencies. For the Argentinians this would have entailed properly training and equipping their armed forces for envisioned operations. It also meant that supplies and transport assets had to be prepositioned prior to the commencement of hostilities. Proactive sustainment planning would have been critical given the limiting aspects of the geography of the theater of operations (lack of infrastructure both on the Falkland Islands and in the mainland regions where support bases were located), and the recognized enemy capability to effectively interdict sea traffic between the mainland and the islands.

For example, critical materiel (such as aluminum mats to lengthen the air strip at Port Stanley) may have had to be prepositioned aboard ships prior to the initial seizure of the islands. This would have allowed their transfer to the Falklands prior to the establishment of a blockade by the British.

Perhaps the most critical requirement of such a campaign plan would have been the need to stage jet fighters out of Port Stanley. If this could have been achieved, the Argentinians may have been able to prevent any naval task force from approaching the islands or establishing an effective naval blockade. At the very least, the risks involved in any attempt to retake the islands may have been sufficient to convince the British that negotiation was a better course of action. Such an outcome would have satisfied the political goal desired by the Argentinian Junta. Further research is required to determine whether or not the Argentinians could have improved the airfield at Port Stanley in the time available to allow their jet fighters to stage out of the Falklands.⁹⁹ While it is known that the Argentinians decided not to risk their Navy,¹⁰⁰ I have not discovered any evidence to indicate that a similar decision was made about their air assets.

A precondition for such a campaign plan would have been reasonable assumptions about enemy capabilities based on thorough analysis of all available information. This would

have allowed the planners to accurately assess risk and to develop branches to address possible enemy reactions. The resulting plan would probably have required phases. Possible phases could have been: an extensive preliminary phase to allow for adequate training of forces, acquisition of required materiel, and prepositioning of materiel and transportation assets; a brief phase in which the islands are occupied by military force; a subsequent phase in which preparations for the defense are undertaken and a build up of supplies on the islands is accomplished; and a final phase in which the islands are protected through deterrence or actual defense. The strategic goals sought by the Argentinians might have been attainable if a similar plan had been designed, organized, and conducted. There was, however, no way that such a plan could have been improvised given the immaturity and inhospitability of the theater, the distances involved, and the short period of time available between the initiation of hostilities and an effective response by the British.

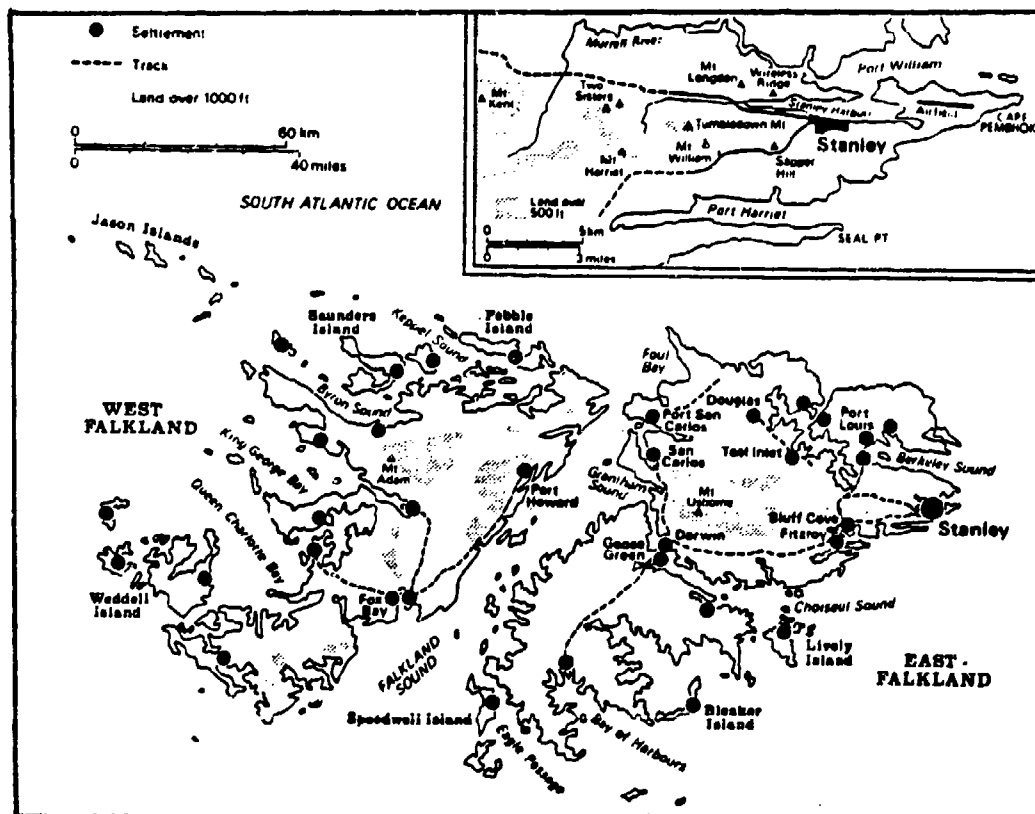
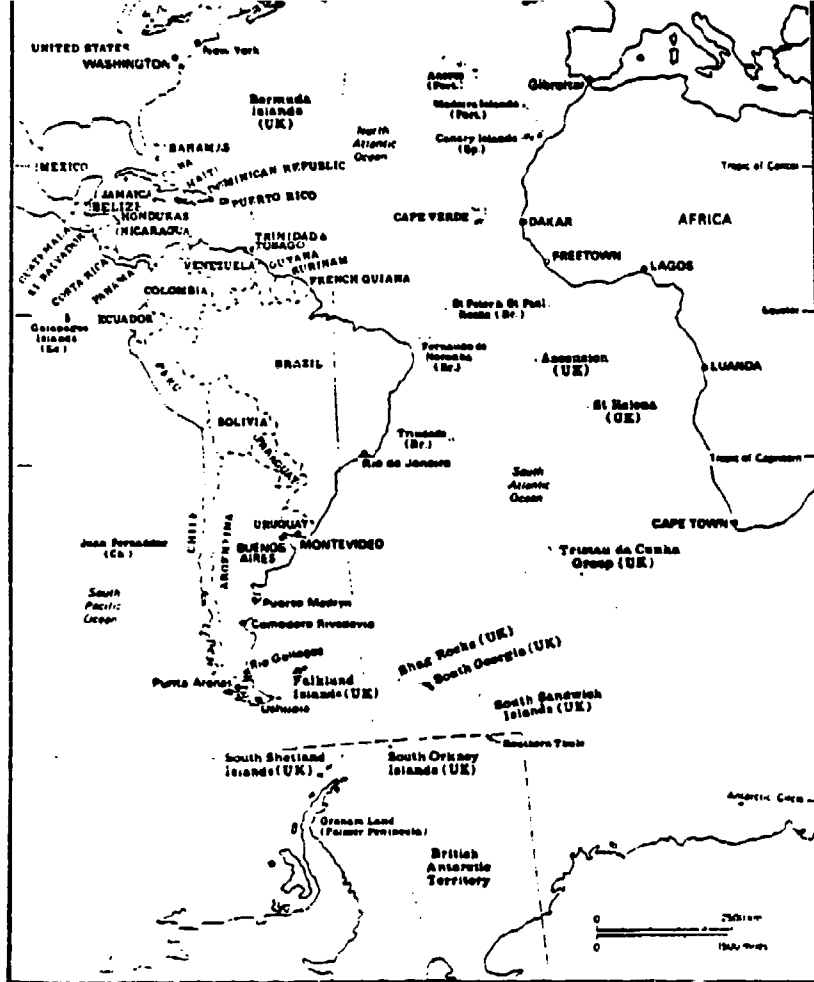
It must be recognized that the lack of a comprehensive campaign plan was not the only problem the Argentinians had. Also contributing to their failure was their lack of a joint doctrine. This meant that synchronization of available forces was problematic, and resulted in less than perfect coordination between the two most effective assets that it had during the conflict - naval combat aviation and the air

force's combat aircraft.. Such synchronization was further complicated by the failure of the Air Force and the Navy to subordinate their organic interests to the exigencies of the situation.

The key lesson from the Falklands conflict is that operational competence or brilliance may not be sufficient to overcome flawed strategy. Too often at the operational level of war, improvisation alone cannot offset the effects of geography or recuperate lost time. A well trained, deployable force and the proximity and maturity of the theater of war/operations increase the ability of the operational artist to overcome strategic miscalculation. Unfortunately, for the Argentinian operational commander, he lacked these essentials. It was not possible for him, given the lack of means, the limited planning time, and the spartan nature of the theater, to design, organize and conduct a campaign to attain the identified strategic goals.

Perhaps this Argentinian defeat also has implications for military governments. The Argentinian Junta took the first step on the road to crisis by using the Davidoff incident on the South Georgia as a way of turning up the heat on the British at the ongoing negotiations over the status of the Falkland Islands. That they were sensitive to the potential of this commercial venture precipitating a crisis is evidenced by their formulation of a plan to capitalize on the anticipated outcome (Plan Alfa).¹²¹ That they were

prepared to exploit the situation is demonstrated by their concern over the timing of the crisis and also by their previous decision to delay Davidoff's expedition.¹⁰⁰ Unfortunately, the Junta risked confrontation at an inauspicious time and were unable to control the escalating crisis once it was underway. Thus, the Malvinas conflict represents a case where one side (the Argentinians) could choose the time and the location for future conflict and erred in doing so. The implication is that a military career may not provide sufficient background to prepare an officer to adopt the wider responsibilities of national leadership, and that leadership at that level requires the ability to orchestrate all the elements of national power and an understanding of the roles and capabilities of all government agencies. It would appear that the Junta that led Argentina in 1982 failed on both these counts.



The Falkland Islands

ENDNOTES

1. Carl von Clausewitz, On War, ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton, NJ, 1984), p. 534.
2. Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-5, Operations, (May 1986), p. 10.
3. Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-6, Large Unit Operations, (Coordinating Draft), (Fort Leavenworth, KS, USACGSC, September 1987), p. 4-3. The tenets of a campaign plan listed by FM 100-6 include:
 - Provides broad concepts of operations and sustainment to achieve strategic military objectives (national and or theater) in a theater of war or theater of operations, the basis for all other planning.
 - Provides an orderly schedule of strategic military decisions -- displays the commander's vision and intent.
 - Orients on the enemy's center of gravity.
 - Organizes a series of related major operations into phases.
 - Allocates subordinate forces and designates command relationships.
 - Provides operational direction and tasks to subordinates.
 - Synchronizes air, land, and sea efforts into a cohesive and synergistic whole, joint in nature.
4. Ejercito Argentino, Reglamento de Conduccion, RC-2-2, Conduccion para las Fuerzas Terrestres, (Buenos Aires, Argentina, January 1983), p. 175.
5. Clausewitz, p. 164.
6. Comision de analisis y evaluacion de las responsabilidades politicas y estrategico militares en el conflicto del Atlantico Sur. Informe Rattenbach: El Drama de las Malvinas, (Buenos Aires, 1988), p. 306, paragraphs 870 & 873.
7. RC-2-2, p. 12
8. Ibid, p. 13.
9. Ibid, p. 13.
10. Ibid, p. 171. The strategic-operational level of command was described as follows: "This level of command is charged with the conduct of military strategy to accomplish missions at the strategic operational level. Its commander is designated by the President---It may be a specified, joint, or combined command."
11. Ibid, Introduction, p. II.

12. Ibid, p. 173.

13. Ibid, p. 171.

14. FM 100-5 (Coordinating Draft), p. 4-1: "A campaign is the operational way that the commander of a theater of war or theater of operations coordinates, employs, and sustains available resources in a series of joint and combined operations to achieve strategic objectives."

15. RC-2-2, p. 175. The manual said this about campaigns: A campaign.. "is a series of related military operations whose purpose is the attaining of a strategic operational objective within a determined time frame. It may frequently envision lengthy pauses and may be divided into phases."

16. FM 100-5, p. 10. US doctrine provides a definition and purpose for campaigns that is similar to the cited Argentinian definition: "A campaign is a series of joint actions designed to attain a strategic objective in a theater of war."

17. RC-2-2, p. 183. The principal features of a campaign plan listed were:

- a. Order of battle.
- b. Strategic military situation and assumptions.
- c. Mission.
- d. Concept of the operation which will express the strategic operational attitude (defensive or offensive), and an outline of the principal operations envisioned, phases, and estimates of duration for the different phases and for the plan.
- e. Detailed description of each phase.
- f. Information and instructions on sustainment.
- g. Information on command, control, and communications.

18. Ibid, p. 184.

19. Ibid, p. 185. The manual suggested that "both adversaries will seek to exploit time in order to gain an advantage over the other, to recover lost time, or to attempt to avoid reaching a decision."

20. Ibid, p. 186.

21. Ibid, p. 194.

22. FM 100-5, p. 31. "Sequels to future battle are based on possible outcomes - victory, defeat, or stalemate."

23. Ibid, p. 30. Branches..."anticipate the enemy's likely actions..and give the commander a means of dealing with them quickly."

24. RC-2-2, p. 195.

25. FM 100-5, p. 29

26. Informe Rattenbach, p. 45, para 112.

27. Ibid, p. 46, para 114

28. Ibid, p. 189. The political objective was established in National Security Directive No. 2/82 (NSD 2/82 in subsequent endnotes) by the Military Council. National Security Directives doctrinally initiated the Argentinian strategic planning system.

29. Ibid, p. 47, para 118.

30. Ibid, p. 47, para 118.

31. Ibid, p. 46, para 115.

32. Ibid, p. 48, para 126.

33. Germain, Lawrence, "Diary of the Falklands Conflict," in Watson & Dunn Ed. Military Lessons of the Falkland Islands War: Views from the United States, (pp. 135-170) (Boulder, CO, 1984), p. 136.

34. Ejercito Argentino, Informe Oficial del Ejercito Argentino Conflicto Malvinas, Tomo I: Desarrollo de los acontecimientos, (Buenos Aires, 1983), p. 22. See also Informe Rattenbach, p. 49, para 127. The official report by the Argentinian Army on the Malvinas Conflict provides excerpts from the different National Strategic Directives, National Military Directives, and Campaign Plans that were prepared/issued during the planning process. Unfortunately, verbatim transcripts are not provided. It appears that this information is contained in a more thorough (and still classified) report - the Calvi Report.

35. Informe Rattenbach, p. 189, para 574. The report cited NSD 1/82 as the directive that established this endstate.

36. Informe Oficial del Ejercito Argentino, Tomo I, p. 23. This recommendation was made by the Working Group at the same time that it submitted the plan for the retaking of the Malvinas to the Military Junta.

37. Informe Rattenbach, p. 49, para 128.

38. Ibid, p. 49, para 130.

39. The crisis on the South Georgia islands evolved from a salvage operation undertaken by an Argentinian merchant, Mr. Constantino Davidoff who intended to recover scrap metal from abandoned whaling stations on the island. He had previously secured the necessary diplomatic and commercial clearances for this venture from the Argentinian Government, the British Embassy in Buenos Aires, and from the British firm that held title to the abandoned installations. Mr Davidoff's party landed on South Georgia on the 19th of March and promptly raised an Argentinian flag. (Informe Rattenbach p. 66 para 192). A crisis soon ensued in which neither the Argentinians nor the British wanted to step back and lose face: the issue for the British was one of exercising its sovereignty and for the Argentinians to avoid acknowledging the de facto British sovereignty. The British decided to resolve the crisis by sending HMS Endurance and a party of Marines to 'evacuate' the Argentinian party. (Informe Rattenbach p. 68, para 199). The Argentinian response was to send a naval ship, A.R.A. Bahia Paraiso to prevent the evacuation of its citizens, and to accelerate the planning process for the retaking of the Falkland Islands. (Informe Rattenbach, p. 72. paras 218-220).

40. Informe Rattenbach, p. 75, para 232.

41. Ibid, p. 59, para 167, see also Informe Oficial, Tomo I, p. 24, para A.

42. Ibid, p. 79, para 242.

43. Informe Oficial, Tomo I, p. 24, para B.

44. Ibid, p. 28.

45. Germain, "Diary of the Falklands Conflict," p. 139.

46. Informe Rattenbach, p. 84, paragraphs 266-271.

47. Informe Oficial, Tomo I, p. 18.

48. Hastings, Max, & Jenkins, Simon, The Battle for the Falklands, (New York, NY 1983), p. 78.

49. Ibid, p. 96.

50. Ibid, p. 61.

51. Informe Rattenbach, p. 39, para 83.

52. The text of the motion passed by the Security Council
Read:

"The Security Council, recalling the request made by the President of the Security Council on the 1st of April, 1982 to the governments of Argentina and of the United Kingdom that they refrain from the use of force in the region of the Falkland Islands, profoundly preoccupied by the reports of an invasion on the 2d of April 1982 by Argentinian armed forces, and declaring that there is a rupture of the peace in the region of the Falkland Islands:

- a. Demands an immediate cessation of hostilities.
- b. Demands the immediate withdrawal of all Argentinian armed forces on the Falkland Islands.
- c. Exhorts the governments of Argentina and of the United Kingdom to seek a diplomatic solution to their differences and to totally respect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

(As cited in Informe Rattenbach, pp 39-40, para 83)

53. Informe Rattenbach, p. 90, para 293.

54. Ibid, p. 193, para 584, Act # 8 of the Comision Militar of 3 April 1982.

55. Informe Oficial, Tomo I, p. 28.

56. Ibid, p. 29. The 8th Infantry Regiment was garrisoned at Comodoro Rivadavia in the southern region of Argentina. It was alerted on the 5th of April and began its deployment by air to the Falklands the following day. Much of its essential equipment was left behind and never taken to the Falkland islands because of the haste of the initial movement, the limited air assets available to transport heavy equipment, and the subsequent naval blockade established by the British.

57. Informe Rattenbach, p. 57, para 156.

58. Ibid, p. 57, para 156.

59. Ibid, P. 57, para 157.

60. Informe Oficial, Tomo I, p. 32, para 3.002a.

61. Informe Rattenbach, p. 195, para 589.

62. Ejercito Argentino, Informe Oficial del Ejercito Argentino Conflicto Malvinas, Tomo II: Abreviaturas, Anexos, y Fuentes Bibliograficas, (Buenos Aires, 1983), The defensive operations order issued by the Falklands Garrison is reproduced at Annex 9 of this document.
63. Informe Oficial, Tomo I, P. 29.
64. FM 100-5, p. 29.
65. Department of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff Publication 1, Dictionary of Military and Related Terms, (1 June 1987), p. 39. Defines an assumption as "a supposition on the current situation or a presupposition on the future course of events, either or both assumed to be true in the absence of positive proof, necessary to enable the commander in the process of planning to complete an estimate of the situation and make a decision on the course of action."
66. Olcese, Haroldo, Estrategia, (Buenos Aires, Instituto Argentino de Estudios Estrategicos y de las Relaciones Internacionales, September, 1982), p. 31.
67. Informe Oficial, Tomo I, p. 15.
68. Informe Rattenbach, p. 46, para 116.
69. Hople, Gerald, "Intelligence and Warning Lessons," in Watson & Dunn Ed. Military Lessons of the Falkland Islands War: Views from the United States, (pp. 97-125) (Boulder, CO, 1984), p. 103.
70. Uhlig, Frank, "Amphibious Lessons," in Watson & Dunn Ed. Military Lessons of the Falkland Islands War: Views from the United States, (pp. 51-66) (Boulder, CO, 1984), p. 52.
71. Ibid, p. 56.
72. Gamba, Virginia, El Peon de la Reina, p. 170.
73. Olcese, Estrategia, p. 19. See also Informe Rattenbach, p. 244, para 754.
74. Gamba, V., Estrategia: intervencion y crisis, p. 181.
75. Falcoff, Mark, "The Falklands Conflict Revisited," Global Affairs (Winter 1990, pp. 144-160), p. 155.
76. Murguizur, Juan Carlos, "The South Atlantic Conflict: An Argentinian Point of View," International Defense Review, no. 2 (February 1983): pp. 135-140, p. 135.

77. Informe Oficial, Tomo I, p. 23.

78. Informe Oficial, Tomo II, Annex 11. Plan 1/82 "S" of the South Atlantic Theater of Command is printed in its entirety. Para 2, mission states that "all of the reconquered insular areas are to be defended to prevent their recapture by the opponent."

79. As it turned out, the theater commander allocated insufficient resources to defend the South Georgias (an understrength platoon). This detachment surrendered without offering even token resistance (Informe Rattenbach, p. 293, para 837). Subsequent to the conflict its commander, 1LT Astiz, had charges preferred for dereliction of duty. (Informe Rattenbach, p. 301, para 850).

80. Informe Oficial, Tomo II, Annex 9, (Operations Order no. 01/82 (Defense), Issued by the ground component commander 072400 APR 82.

81. Meehan, John, "The Operational Trilogy," Parameters, vol xvi, pp. 9-18, p. 10.

82. Informe Rattenbach, p. 186, para 571.

83. Ibid, p. 186, para 571.

84. Clausewitz, pp. 595-6, the center of gravity is described as "the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends. That is the point against which all our energies should be directed."

85. Meehan, "The Operational Trilogy," p. 15.

86. Clausewitz, p. 596. Even though it was suggested that a capital could be the center of gravity, I interpret this to mean that the capital represented a locus of political power and moral strength, which if captured, would force a small nation to quit the war. Port Stanley certainly did not have such a strategic significance.

87. Informe Rattenbach, p. 197, para 591.

88. Informe oficial, Tomo I, p. 16. See also Turcio, Carlos, Malvinas: Testimonio de su Gobernador, (Buenos Aires, Editorial Sudamericana, 1983), p. 89.

89. Privatsky, Kenneth, "British Combat Service Support During the Falklands Island War: Considerations for Providing Operational Sustainment to Remote areas." (Fort Leavenworth, KS, 18 May 1988), p. 18.

90. Informe Rattenbach, p. 55, para 148.
91. Informe Oficial, Tomo II, annex 11. Paragraph 4, Logistics has been translated from the original in the theater order No. 1/82.
92. FM 100-5, p. 60. The six key sustainment functions are: manning, arming, fueling, fixing, transporting the supported force, and protecting the sustainment system.
93. Informe Oficial, Tomo I, p. 153.
94. FM 100-5, p. 60.
95. Informe Rattenbach, p. 234, para 729.
96. Informe Oficial, Tomo I, p. 151.
97. Informe Rattenbach, p. 57, para 159.
98. Moro, Ruben, The History of the South Atlantic Conflict: The War for the Malvinas. (New York, 1989), p. 88.
99. Ibid, p. 77. See also Informe Rattenbach, p. 204, para 623.
100. Informe Rattenbach, p. 57, para 614.
101. Informe Rattenbach, p. 64, para 180. Plan Alfa called for a specially prepared detachment to deploy quickly to the South Georgia Islands to prevent the Argentinian citizens that were members of the Davidoff commercial venture from being forcibly evicted by the British. The unit spent several months in the Patagonia region acclimating itself for operations on the island, and was eventually employed in March 1982.
102. Ibid, p. 64, para 184.

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